

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in light of the above amendments to the application and the following remarks.

Regarding the Claims

Claims 6 and 10 have been amended, Claim 7 has been cancelled, and new Claims 11 and 12 have been added. Currently pending in the application, therefore, are Claims 1-6 and 8-12, of which Claims 1, 6, 11, and 12 are independent. No new matter has been added.

Claims 6-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Liardet (U.S. 4,864,790) in view of Hirsch (U.S. 4,849,145) and Zegler et al. (U.S. 5,567,497).

The Examiner cites Hirsch (specifically, the abstract and Fig. 5) as teaching injecting thermoplastic into holes in the leather layer. Referring to Column 5, lines 59-65, Hirsch discusses Fig. 4 embodiment construction, namely, Fig. 4 being described as an "embodiment having two parallel-extending strips 10. Fig. 5 is stated as corresponding essentially to Fig. 4 and having "raised sites 11 are provided in the region between the strips 10 on the synthetic resin layer 1." Applicant respectfully submits that two parallel strips in the context of the present invention are not analogous structurally to one or more holes in the leather layer. Applicant has amended Claim 6 to include the structural language regarding the at least one through hole. Additionally, Applicant has added new Claim 11, which incorporates language defining the hole so as to more clearly distinguish the claimed invention from the strips of material used in Hirsch.

As such, Hirsch Fig. 5 does not, in combination with Liardet and Zegler et al. render the present invention obvious.

Additionally, Fig. 10 of Hirsch, described at column 6, lines 52-59 does not render the present invention obvious. Fig. 10 shows an embodiment in which a hole 17 contains an inner hole 14. This hole is maintained open, i.e., it is clearly not filled in by the resin as the intended

purpose of the hole appears to be to accept the tooth/finger of the watchband clasp. As set forth in the claims as amended, the at least one through hole is filled in with resin. As such, the claims as amended are not rendered obvious by the cited combination of references.

New Claim 11 has been added, which is a product by process claim. No new subject matter has been added.

Applicant respectfully submits that none of the references, taken alone or in combination, discloses, teaches or suggests a leather tile with a pattern of resin appearing on the leather upper surface thereof and obtained by resin penetrating through the holes. In particular, Hirsch only discloses a watchband and not a tile and no patterns in Hirsch are formed by the resin on the surface of the tile.

Applicant respectfully submits that the claims as amended are distinguishable over the cited combination of references. None of the references, singly or in combination, disclose the invention as presently claimed. There is no suggestion or motivation in any of these references to combine some or all of them to provide a leather tile of the present invention as claimed. It would not have been obvious to combine the teachings of the cited references and, therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that the Claims as amended are patentable over the cited art.

Some amendments and remarks contained in this document, or in other documents filed or to be filed with the US Patent Office in this case or related cases, may in the future be deemed, by a court of law or government agency of competent jurisdiction, to be narrowing amendments and/or related to patentability. Accordingly, the public is hereby advised that the applicant: (a) intends to relinquish only that claim coverage which is clearly, explicitly, precisely and unequivocally stated to be relinquished; (b) does not intend to relinquish any other claim coverage; (c) reserves the right to assert that any such amendments and/or remarks are not narrowing and/or are not related to patentability; and (d) intends to fully assert the full range of equivalents, under the Doctrine of Equivalents and otherwise, which are presently known or which may become known in the future, for each and every element of each and every claim, and for each and every claim.

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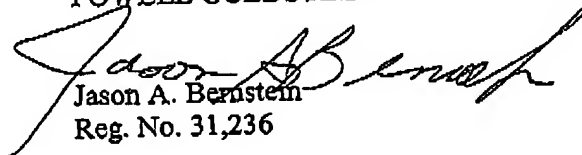
NO. 406 P. 10/10

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Should the Examiner have questions or suggestions which will put this application in line for allowance, he or she is requested to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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